

# Japan, Korea, and China: The Problem of Defining Continuities

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ENCIRCLING THE East China Sea, portions of Japan, Korea, and China form the major blocks in the culture area of East Asia. From the Shantung Peninsula to the Liaotung Peninsula is a distance of 125 km; from the Liaotung Peninsula to the Hwanghae coast of Korea, about 230 km; from Korea to Kyushu, about 230 km, and from Kyushu directly across to the Yangtze delta, about 480 km. The Pacific boundary of the East China Sea is guarded by the Ryukyu Islands or Nansei Shoto, in which each succeeding landfall can be seen before the preceding island sinks from sight, with the exception of the southern islands of Miyako and Yaeyama.

In terms of vegetation and other natural resources, western Japan, the southern tip of Korea, the Ryukyus, and central China are all part of a zone of rich broadleaf forest characterized by bamboos, oaks, camellias, tea, chestnuts, and many other edible and useful plant resources (Hotta n.d., Pearson 1975, 1976; Pearson and Pearson, 1978). We do not know clearly the total range of prehistoric cultural responses to this environmental zone at this point, but suspect that there may be many common elements related to similar subsistence systems in this area.

The ties which have been developed across this Mediterranean-like sea are relatively well-known for the periods following the emergence of states on the Korean peninsula and in Japan; yet the extent of prehistoric contact, and the question of "genetic relationships" of the array of local cultures on the shores of the East China Sea, remain thorny and much-debated issues. Egami (1964) has postulated that the Japanese people and the Japanese state both developed from extensive migration from different parts of the Asian continent, and Murayama has stated that the Japanese language is a product of the overlay of a language or languages

from the Asiatic continent upon a substratum of a Malayo-Polynesian language (or languages) (Miller 1974c: 98). Kagawa states:

It is logical to assume in the first place that since rice itself and earlier cultivated grains such as millet and deccan grass (millets) did not originate in Japan, both the grains and their cultivation techniques were introduced from the Chinese mainland and their earliest development took place in Kyushu (1974a: 1).

On the other hand, however, Chester Chard states:

Japan's geographical isolation is strongly reflected in the cultural record which is one of indigenous development and minimum outside influence. . . . Next to nothing is known as to the identity and source of such outside influences as did impinge on the Japanese islands from the mainland, or conceivably the Pacific world (1974: 208).

One can sympathize with Chard's antidiffusionist stand in light of the random selection of correspondences and the lack of rigor in some of the work on origins. An emphasis on the internal anthropological processes of development is an obvious requisite in Japanese prehistory at present. Yet it seems that the reality of significant relationships with the mainland must be approached in some positive fashion.

It appears to me that one problem, among many, lies at the level of methodology. Prehistorians speak of race, language, and culture in reconstructing the life of extinct communities, and culture historians use physical anthropology, historical linguistics, ethnohistory, technology, and ecology as separate approaches. Leaving aside the first of these, we may ask how the archaeologist is to separate diffusion from convergent evolution; can structural and distributional correspondences be separated from the products of direct historical connection (Rouse 1955)? Can analogy be separated from homology (Binford 1962)?

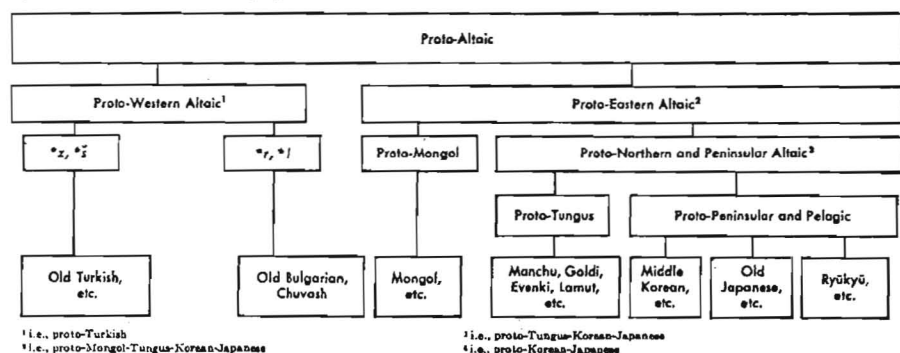
## 1. HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

Perhaps the most solid ground for showing genetic connections between Japan and mainland Asia lies in the field of historical linguistics.

Linguists seem to agree that Japanese, Korean, and Ryukyuan are related languages which are all part of the Ural-Altaic language family (Fig. 1). Miller (1971: 43) has postulated an original proto-Peninsular and Pelagic (proto-Korean-Japanese) which accounts for the common inheritance of these three languages from Proto Northern and Peninsular Altaic. Proto-Korean-Japanese is derived from Proto Northern and Peninsular Altaic. Miller postulates a "geographical area of linguistic symbiosis that must have been shared in common by speakers of earlier forms of Tungus on the one hand and those of earlier forms of Korean-Japanese on the other" (1971: 45). Is there any way of recognizing archaeologically a population of speakers of either proto-Korean-Japanese or Proto Northern and Peninsular Altaic?

The study of loanwords into Japanese is yet another line of inquiry (Martin 1966). Several groups of loanwords, which cannot as yet be grouped into any relative kind

## Japanese and the Other Altaic Languages



## Proto-Northern and Peninsular Areal Relationships

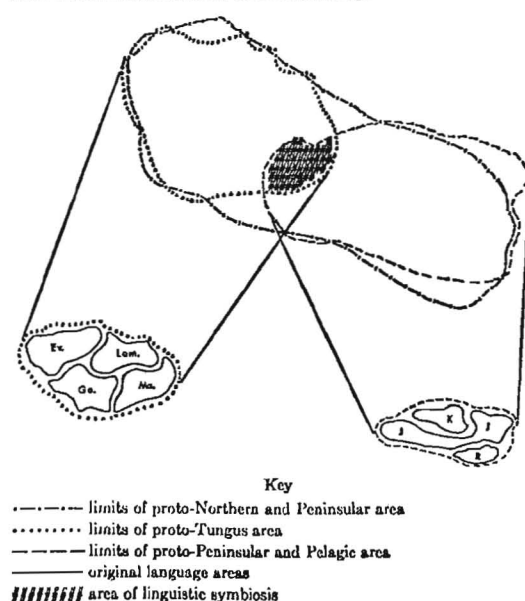


Fig. 1 Relationship of Japanese to other Altaic languages. Source: R. Miller, *Japanese and the Other Altaic Languages*, pp. 46 and 47. © 1971 by The University of Chicago Press.

of chronology, have been identified. These can be separated from forms which are similar because of earlier genetic inheritance. While debate continues over the etymology of individual items, the actual groups seem to stand with some degree of certainty. A preliminary list of these loanwords, which Miller suggests might have occurred in the Yayoi or Tumulus Period, includes the words for hatchet or machete, spade, skewer, dry field, rice cakes for religious offerings, boat, needle, board, liquor, rope, sew, soot, spear, and wheel (Miller 1967: 67). Another set of

loanwords from Altaic languages includes the word for female shaman, the term for family, common descent group, burial tumulus, a term for riding on horseback, a leather object used in ancient Japanese archery, the term for single-edged sword, armor, shoes, baggy trousers, and the term for Hotoke or Buddha (Miller 1967: 79–81). A further group of early loanwords from Chinese, proposed by Bernhard Karlgren, includes glosses for salt, silkworm, cryptomeria, grind or polish, flay, build, cleave, hedge, summer, threshold, house, village, wheat, bamboo, boat, pot, sickle, rice, state, silk stuff, horse, and flowering plum (Miller 1967: 237).

Miller states that “by and large, Karlgren’s list gives a good idea of the type and variety of these old Chinese loans in Japanese and although items of detail may be questioned, it remains secure as a body of evidence” (1967: 237). To this list, Miller would add the Old Japanese term for grave (*faka*).

From the evidence above, it seems to me that we can hardly postulate an isolated development for Japanese culture in the prehistoric period. As in archaeology, there has been a tendency to consider Japanese linguistic phenomena as a world unto themselves. Miller states, “as Kamei Takashi puts it in the idiom of Japanese scholarship, the terms *shin’en* and *shinzoku kankei* are used when linguistic relationships can be known, as in the case of foreign languages, but *keito* and *keitoron* when they are not, or cannot, be understood, i.e. for Japanese” (1974c: 94).

The question of an Austronesian substratum is currently of great interest in Japan. Shichiro Murayama believes that Japanese is a mixed or hybrid language combining Malayo-Polynesian elements with Altaic elements. He has suggested that in many Old Japanese verbs, for instance, there is a set of Altaic inflections imposed on Malayo-Polynesian lexical items (Miller 1974c: 97). Murayama utilizes a concept of “hybrid” or “mixed” languages which is not accepted by most linguists. Because of the nature of the mixing postulated first by Polivanov and later by Murayama, there seems to be no way of separating these languages rigorously, or of determining which component in the mixture is antecedent. A similar mixture, with more Altaic and less Austronesian in the cocktail, has been proposed for Korean (C. W. Kim n.d.). In a series of comprehensive review articles (1972, 1974a, 1974b), Miller has pointed out that the etymologies of the Austronesian words are in most cases more complicated than Altaic etymologies and can be explained more simply by using the framework of Altaic languages.

The prehistoric distribution of Austronesian languages on the southern fringe of East Asia in south and central China has been reviewed by Paul Benedict in his study of Austronesian loanwords into Archaic Chinese (1966, 1967a, 1967b). In my opinion, however, the general possibility of the prehistoric existence of Austronesian languages within East Asia seems to be a weak one at this point.

## 2. ETHNOHISTORIC DATA

With some trepidation, I introduce a second area of research—ethnohistory. This is a difficult area for archaeologists, since it involves a knowledge of the sources in Chinese and Korean history, and expert opinion is greatly divided on a number of issues. Yet it seems to me that just as we cannot continue to ignore linguistic data, we also cannot continue to ignore the substantial work of historians, particularly in relation to the Yayoi. In particular I am using two papers by Gari Ledyard of

Columbia University, "The Thalassocracy of Wa" (n.d.), and "Gallop Along with the Horseriders: Looking for the Founders of Japan" (1975). In the first paper, Ledyard shows that the terms Korea and Japan really have no historical meaning until the end of the Kofun Period. In the centuries prior to this date, a group known as the Wa or Wo lived in a chain of small states in the western and southern Japanese islands and the south of the Korean peninsula. In the Yayoi Period, these states were ruled by Queen Pimiha or Pimiko, as described in the *Wei Chih*. Ledyard points out that while Pimiha did not control the Kimhae region of the Korean peninsula, it was occupied by people ethnically similar to those in her kingdom. Ledyard terms these units maritime states or thalassocracies. He suggests that the Wa persisted in Japan to a much later date in the Izumo area, although they were eclipsed by the Yamato people in the Kinai area.

Ledyard argues convincingly that the problem of the role of the Japanese in the state of Mimana in the south of the Korean peninsula has been complicated by nationalist historians of more recent times. Japanese certainly seem to have had an important role in its establishment, even if one goes only on the way in which modern Korean historians attempt to ignore the problem. The state of Mimana included at least the lower Nakdong drainage, and according to some writers, extended as far north as the Ch'ung Ch'ong Provinces and into the Cholla Provinces on the west. According to Suematsu, Mimana was founded in A.D. 369 after an indefinite period in which it had exerted a more shadowy influence over the territory. The *Sung Shu*, compiled in the 5th century A.D., states that the Japanese kings were confirmed as general intendants of military affairs for the six countries—Japan, Silla, Mimana, Kaya, Chinhan, and Mahan—in 451 and 478. Most Japanese historians apparently believed that with the consolidation of the Yamato state, the Japanese extended overseas relations to the states of the Korean peninsula. However, Egami's Horse Rider Theory suggests that the peaceful agrarian Yayoi states were overcome by horse people, ultimately derived from the area to the north of China, who became the rulers. The relationship of these people to Koguryo and Puyo, however, is left unclear in his exposition and has left him open to criticism. Without a very comprehensive knowledge of the Kofun Period, it is difficult to judge Egami's theory. Although the case for foreign input may not be as strong as he makes it, the opposite picture of isolation and independent development during Yayoi and Kofun cannot be supported by the ethnohistorical data. A rich field awaits those who conduct problem-oriented research in the Mimana and Han states region of southern Korea and on the Kofun of Japan.

### 3. EVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTINUITIES

The culture-historical method has been established and refined over several decades. Of great importance is the establishment of analytical units which can be organized in a time-space framework, and the discovery of similarities and differences in these units at different levels of analysis (Trigger 1968). Recently archaeologists have come to recognize the importance of sampling in the entire procedure. Similarities may be established at the level of individual traits (descriptive correlation in the terms of Rouse 1955), or in terms of the distribution of these traits (distributional correlation), or in terms of their hypothesized genetic relationship.

Integrative concepts such as horizon style and tradition can also be used to characterize spatial and temporal continuities (Wiley and Phillips 1958). A further contribution has been made through the establishment of the concept of interaction sphere (Caldwell 1970). Wilmsen states that

Whereas a regional tradition is defined by the styles within the artifact classes belonging to the subsistence technologies, artifact types diagnostic of Hopewell functioned in the social subsystem where they served integrational or social maintenance tasks. This helps explain why a local Middle Woodland group could share certain "artifacts" (or types) with other groups over a large geographic area—the basis for defining a tradition—while simultaneously lacking artifact types belonging to a second and entirely different functional category possessed by some but not by all groups within a tradition. (Streuver and Houart 1972: 50)

To this corpus of methodology we can add the division of artifact type into stylistic and functional (Chang 1968: 113). It is proposed that functional types are useful in determining ecological or economic continuities while stylistic similarities, by their particular and arbitrary nature, are more likely to indicate ethnic continuities.

Authors who have attempted to relate Japan to the Asiatic mainland have generally had trouble with sampling problems. Rarely have sets of artifacts with documented contexts and similar functions been examined. Nevertheless there are some interesting correspondences which should not be ignored.

Serizawa has proposed a common cultural base in the Japanese islands and the Northeast Asian continent of pottery with linear relief associated with microlithic tools. This is represented by sites such as Fukui Cave, Layer III, and (perhaps) by sites such as Sha Kuo ts'un in the lower Liao valley (described in Chang 1968: 166). Although microliths have been reported from the upper layers of Sokchang-ni, their association is far from clear. Serizawa holds that ceramics could have originated in many localities at once, and that they are not necessarily associated with agriculture (T. Kobayashi 1974).

On the other hand, Sato, who relies heavily on ceramic typology, has denied that linear relief pottery is the oldest in Japan. He states that pitted pottery is the oldest, followed by spatula incised and comb patterned, and that the route of diffusion was across the Japan Sea to sites such as Osegasawa in north central Honshu, which was one of the first sites to yield forms of ceramics earlier than the *oshigata mon* type. Sato draws correspondence with Zaisanovka and Shabarakh Usu (1975). Kobayashi (1974) points out, however, that the maritime orientation with Jōmon does not appear until Early Jōmon (which follows Incipient). Sato's refusal to acknowledge the early radiocarbon dates for Jōmon, his insistence on a stylistic typology as the only method of comparison, and the arbitrariness of the samples he uses make it impossible to carry on any dialogue.

In Kyushu it has been proposed by various scholars that Sobata pottery, with its abundance of incised decoration, shows influence from Korea. Other continuities have been difficult to evaluate because there are so few reliable, dated samples of Korean archaeological materials at this time range. Continuities in Late Jōmon and Final Jōmon are rather striking. The black polished ceramics of the Goryo Type of

Kyushu, in particular Type II vessels from the first half of the Final Jōmon of Kyushu (Kagawa 1974: 3), are said to resemble black ceramics from Amsa-dong in the Han River valley. At the same time, black polished ceramics have been found in a number of sites in Korea such as Sinhung-dong, Bong-san gun, Hwanghae Province, and can be dated to the Plain Pottery Period which extends from at least 1000 B.C. to 200 B.C. (Kim 1972: 77-78). With the appearance of the Late and Latest Jōmon, plain, ridged pottery of the Yusu Type in Kyushu, Otomasu has pointed to the presence of dolmens and mainland types of stone tools in North Kyushu (Seki 1974). Yusu-like ceramics can be found in the Pusan area. Kotani has mentioned that querns of the Final Jōmon of southwestern Japan are very flat with only a slightly concave grinding surface. The form is closer to that of the Tuman, Taedong area of Korea (1972: 249). I believe that parallels are drawn with the Taedong-Pyongyang area because intact Plain Pottery sites are more abundant, and have been excavated in greater number in the north than in the south.

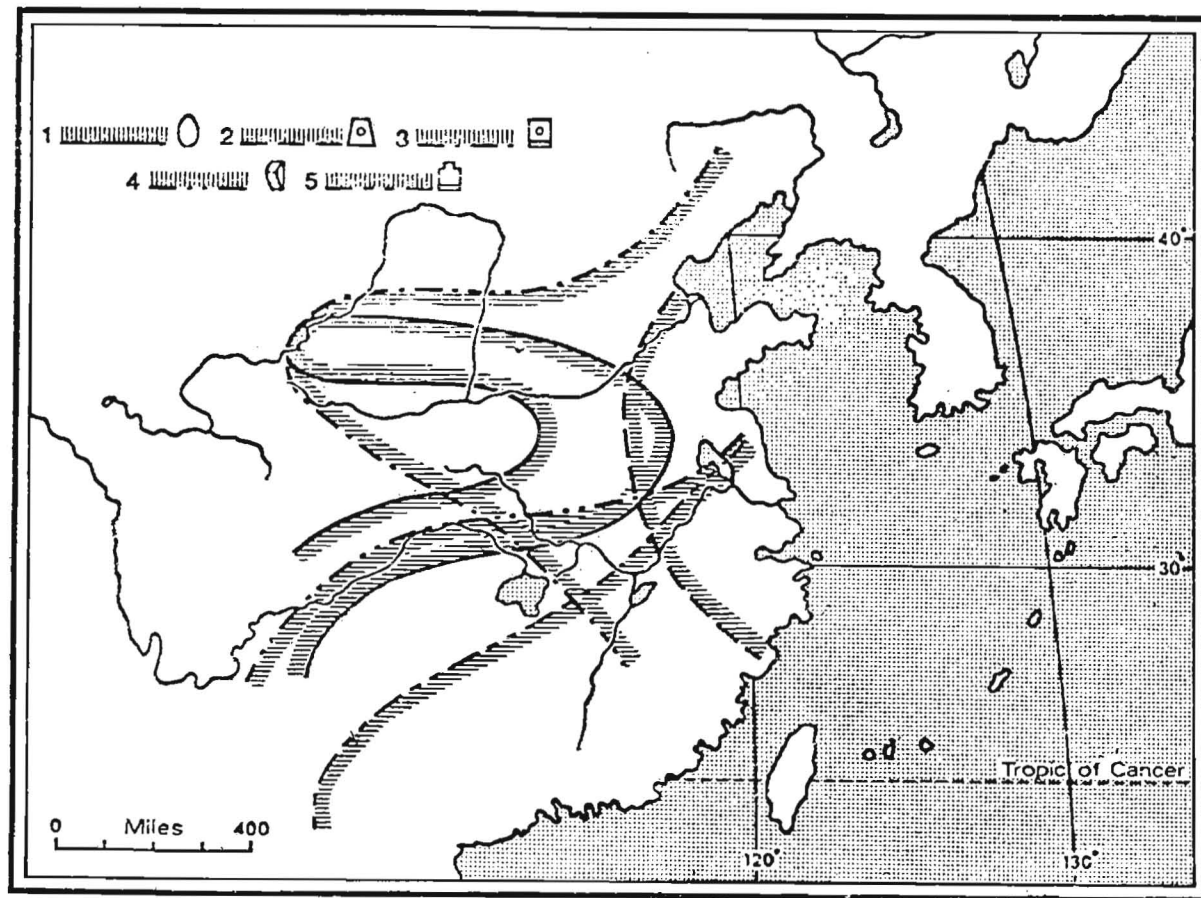
The Sinhung-dong site also has a stone-tool assemblage: double convex adzes, perforated polished stone adzes, plano-convex forms, cylindrical adzes, knives, daggers, polished spindle whorls, and polished arrowheads. These are also found at sites such as Kumtan-ni and Wonam-ri in the Taedong-Pyongyang area of Korea and in the Itazuke site, Fukuoka. Other features from Itazuke said to be related to the mainland are the use of defensive ditches and bag-shaped storage pits.

There can be little doubt of the transfer of an all-purpose lithic tool kit and ceramic assemblage from the Korean peninsula to Japan at the end of Jōmon and early Yayoi.

The relationship between Plain Pottery sites in the Taedong area and Kyushu cannot be placed in a very accurate time framework at this point, the Taedong sites appearing to date to the first half of the 1st millennium B.C. I expect that Sinhung-dong and other sites in its vicinity may be contemporary with late prehistoric sites on the Liaotung Peninsula, for example Shuang Tou-tze, rather than with Ching-lien-kang, as postulated by Jeong-hak Kim, since Ching-lien-kang is too early. We might construct a testable hypothesis that the tool kit of perforated adzes and plano-convex, double convex, and cylindrical adze forms are associated with intensive rice cultivation, either directly as agricultural tools or indirectly as fabricators of wooden agricultural tools (as suggested by Egami 1964: 40). This might mean that the set diffused from China to Liaotung or direct from China to the Korean peninsula. Evidence of earlier diffusion over part of this area has been proposed by William Watson (1971: 27) who shows that incised chevron-decorated vessels can be found from Hung-shan, near Ch'ih-Feng in Manchuria, right through North Korea to the lower Amur, Sakhalin, and Japan (1971: Plate 22). From a study of the distribution of stone axe-adze types, Watson states that the area of overlap of the rounded axes with the flat forms in China is comparatively small. His diagrams show this area to be in the Kiangsu Anhwei area (Fig. 2), which would fit with the general area of Ching-lien-kang. This stone-tool kit can be contrasted with the Horinouchi and Soya tool kits illustrated by Chard (1974: 137), which have chipped forms and plano-convex polished tools (although no cross sections are given).

We are all familiar with the bronze mirrors, daggers, and halberds which appear in Korean and in Japanese Yayoi sites. Recent typologies of these artifact classes have been presented by Jeong-hak Kim (1972) and Kobayashi (1974). In both cases





The geographic distribution of neolithic stone axes: (1) rounded, *walzenbeil*; (2) flat trapezoid; (3) rectangular; (4) segmented; (5) shouldered. The distributions lie on the shaded sides of the boundaries.

Fig. 2 Distribution of adze forms. Source: William Watson, *Cultural Frontiers in Ancient East Asia*, p. 22. © 1971 by The University of Edinburgh Press.



it appears that prototypes developed in the Liaoning area in the 8th or the 7th century B.C., were diffused to Korea where they underwent further development, and were first traded to Japan. By the end of Yayoi, mirrors, daggers, and halberds were being produced in Japan to suit local tastes. In the case of mirrors, Chinese examples were also imported directly into Japan probably through the entrepôt of Lolang, near the modern city of Pyongyang.

What can be made of the continuities I have catalogued in this rambling fashion? It should be pointed out that similarities do not always involve the same kind of social process.

1. The postulated common base of Late Palaeolithic (or Mesolithic?) cultures may indicate a group of common subsistence patterns for the latest Pleistocene in the area. Hayashi has suggested that the particular microblade forms represent particular adaptations (1967). This is a difficult problem, since microlithic technology is known from a very wide range of environments from tropical to subarctic. Serizawa, at the Peterborough Conference, has indicated that there are three microlithic industries in Japan, and they all appear to be intrusive (personal communication).
2. Contacts with the Korean peninsula at the end of the Jōmon are indicated in the development of Yusu pottery, the new quern forms, and the range of new stone tools. The possibility that black pottery from Plain Pottery sites in the Hwanghae area of Korea, and the Yusu type of Kyushu, are ultimately derived from Lungshan sites in the Liaotung area cannot be ruled out, at least on the basis of chronology, since the Shuang T'ou Tzu site in Liaotung dates to about 1400 B.C. Yet another possibility which should be explored is the possible diffusion of Shang ceramics to Korea. Specimens of black Shang pottery in the Avery Brundage Collection, San Francisco, on first impression seem similar to specimens from some Korean sites. Perhaps the changes in technology in Korea and Japan reflect in some way the gradual segregation of Peninsular and Pelagic forms of language of proto-Korean-Japanese, a process which culminated in the clear emergence of Yayoi. Jung-bae Kim (1975: 167-179) suggests that populations may have moved from the Manchuria-Liaoning area into the Korean peninsula in the first millennium B.C.—the Ye-Maek—with the advent of new ceramic forms. I have emphasized the external input into this process, while Chard lays more emphasis on the internal continuity.
3. In Southeast Asian archaeology, attempts persist to link particular language groups to particular kinds of artifacts, such as quadrangular adzes with Austro-nesians. These efforts seem to be poorly thought through, to say the least. Linking individual artifact types with linguistic groupings does not seem possible in the East Asian case. Research in the Ryukyus, both in linguistics and archaeology, seems to confirm that with the exception of the Yaeyama Islands, the prehistoric population in Okinawa, at least in post-Palaeolithic times, was derived from Japan rather than from the south. This means that the East China Sea was probably ringed with Sinitic- or Altaic-speaking peoples, with the exception of Taiwan.
4. The dispersal of bronze luxury goods in the maritime areas of the Korean peninsula and Japan marks the beginning of a new level of interaction in the maritime regions of the China Sea. Communities in South Korea and Kyushu participated in an "interaction sphere" which extended as far away as the Liaotung

peninsula, without including the heartland of China. It may be that Wa people moved from the maritime areas of the Korean peninsula into the Japanese islands at the time of the Yayoi. In later times we hear of continuing activity between the elite of Silla and Paekche, for instance, and states within Japan. Trade of iron from the Han states of the southern Korean peninsula no doubt aided in this development of a regional symbiosis, which had an important effect on the Japanese state. Geophysical analysis of the bronze artifacts involved in this exchange would be of particular interest.

### CONCLUSIONS

In summary, it is proposed that incised pottery of the comb-pattern or Sobata type, polished black pottery, and plain pottery are all cases of diffused stylistic categories of material culture, which meet descriptive and distributional criteria of similarity and can be said to represent genetic cultural connections between the Japanese islands and the Korean peninsula. The so-called Yayoi tool kit, particularly the cylindrical gouge forms and perforated adzes, appear to be diffused "functional" or "ecosocial" artifact categories indicating the spread of a new subsistence pattern of irrigated rice production. The same situation, of a new subsistence pattern, may be the case in the early intrusion of microlithic industries into Japan, although this idea has not been tested yet. A third group of artifacts—bronze mirrors of Chinese type and also mirrors with fine geometric decoration, narrow daggers, and halberds—are forms which entered Japan through economic interaction rather than through population input. It could be stated that the transfer of incised pottery took place in the 4th millennium, that of black polished ceramics in the 2nd and early 1st millennia, and that of plain coarse pottery in the latter half of the last millennium. As I have mentioned earlier, interaction appears to have occurred across the Pohai Gulf in the late 2nd millennium B.C., bringing new forms from Shantung and Kiangsu to the Hwanghae, Pyongan area. Of course much more work needs to be done on each point made above, and the social and economic aspects of such diffusion and trade have not been touched.

The idea of direct contacts from the Chung Yuan of North China to Korea and Japan has passed out of currency with greater knowledge of regional variation with the Chinese Neolithic, and the beginnings of greater knowledge of Korea. However, there seems to be evidence of connections between the Liaotung and Shantung areas, the Liaotung-Liaoning area and Korea, and from Korea to Japan. If I might be granted one last idle speculation, I would suggest that the Liaoning-Manchurian area may be the area of "linguistic symbiosis" postulated by Miller (1967: 45-47), between Northern and Peninsular Altaic languages. Contact from Kiangsu to Korea also seems to be an area deserving focused research.

There have been different kinds of continuities between Japan and her neighbors in the China Sea over a long span of prehistory. During the Post Pleistocene Climatic Optimum, a warming trend thought to have occurred from about 6000 to 2000 B.C., the subtropical forests of central China extended farther north along the China coast into the central regions of the Korean peninsula and also into the lower Tohoku area of Japan. Within this zone, some ideas were shared, and subsistence strategies seem to have been similar in basic outline. In the Final Jōmon and Yayoi

Periods, linguistic borrowing and population input took place. Loanwords from this time period can be recognized in Japanese.

The universal problem faced by the archaeologist in tracing diffusion is to distinguish it from convergent evolution, and to achieve an understanding of the behavior which produced the observed distributions. We have not yet arrived at this, although the ethnohistorical and linguistic data we have surveyed suggest some possible directions. I believe we are further along in our investigations of the external relations of Japan than we think. Rather than wait for more and more mindless, inductive data gathering, we should find ways to test specific hypotheses with the data at hand.

#### POSTSCRIPT

During my sabbatical leave, under the auspices of the Canada Council and the University of British Columbia, I was able to pursue some of the ideas presented in this paper using the sources of the University of Kyoto. The Shuang T'ou Tzu site in the Liaotung Peninsula was reported by Egami, Komai, and Mizuno (1934). Apparently it was not excavated scientifically; however, a large collection of artifacts was made by Japanese residents in the area and the site was well-known locally. Many of the artifact categories are shared with sites in the Hwanghae area as typified by Sinhung-dong. Of the several different kinds of ceramics, vessel forms include both the narrow-necked jar and the wider-mouthed forms typical of Korean Plain Pottery. These are typed by the authors into Group no. 1 (1934: 7). Other kinds of pottery, which seem to resemble Lungshanoid ceramics, are placed in Group no. 2. They are distinct from the specimens of Sinhung-dong (Jeong-hak Kim 1972: 78). In addition, the adze forms such as the perforated ring shape and the chisels, as well as the polished arrowheads, are represented in both sites. Polished reaping knives also have the same form—the semilunar shape. Divergent artifacts include a perforated adze in the shape of a bird's head. The authors point out that this type is found in northern Eurasia, and give several comparative illustrations. Recalibrated dates for the Shuang T'ou Tzu site are  $1497 \pm 95$  B.C. (ZK-78) and  $1082 \pm 90$  B.C. (ZK-79) (Pearson 1973: 143). Details are not provided by the Chinese on the exact provenience of the carbon sample, nor is there any information available on the stratigraphy of the site, which could well be crucial in the whole discussion. Nevertheless the early date seems to confirm suspicions that the Plain Pottery Period began early in North Korea at the end of the 2nd millennium B.C.

A further point should be made regarding the derivation of Korean bronze weapons from the bronze assemblages of Manchuria and Liaoning. There are indisputable similarities in the daggers, halberds, and mirrors; however, it should be kept in mind that these artifact types comprise only a portion of the bronze technology of the latter area, which includes vessels and ornaments of various kinds. The vessels did not diffuse to Korea at all during this period, but the same categories are found in the graves of the Lolang community some thousand years later (Lo-lang Han Tombs Publishing Society 1974, 1975).

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